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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2385

October 20, 1988

## U.S. TRADE SURPLUS

The U.S. agricultural trade surplus remained near \$1 billion for the third consecutive month in August, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Exports grew by \$254 million, imports by \$303 million in August. August's surplus of \$979 million exceeded August 1987 by more than 60 percent.

## AUGUST IMPORTS

U.S. agricultural imports during August rebounded to nearly \$1.9 billion, their highest level since March 1988, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Imports declined 4 consecutive months from April through July, largely due to seasonal factors. August imports of most commodities rose: Fruits, meats, live animals, vegetable oils, coffee, cocoa, rubber and sugar exceeded July import levels. The October-August total was \$19.4 billion, 2 percent above the same period a year ago.

## EXPORT ENHANCEMENT SALES UP

Fiscal 1988 sales under the Export Enhancement Program totaled about \$3.3 billion, almost double fiscal 1987 sales, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Leading the EEP-assisted sales were wheat, sorghum, rice and vegetable oil. The EEP-assisted wheat sales reached 26.3 million tons, including sales to the USSR, China and North Africa. Vegetable oil sales under the program rose to 357,000 tons, primarily to importers in North Africa, the Middle East and India.

## WORLD WHEAT PRODUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

The world production of wheat for 1988/89 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 505.2 million metric tons, up 0.6 million or less than 1 percent from last month and up less than 1 percent from last year's harvest. East Europe production is estimated at 44.2 million tons, up 1.2 million or 3 percent from last month and up 11 percent from last year. Wheat crops throughout the Balkans were in good condition and generally undamaged by the severe drought. Higher yields were estimated in Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Romania. China production is estimated at 87.5 million tons, down slightly from last year. European Community production is estimated at 76.7 million tons, up 7 percent from last year. Australia production is estimated at 13.8 million tons, up 11 percent from last year.

## SOVIET GRAIN HARVEST

As of October 3, the Soviets cut grains and pulses on 103.1 million hectares, and threshed on 102½ million hectares, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Corn-for-grain has been harvested from 2.7 million hectares...427,000 more than by the same date a year ago.

WORLD COARSE  
GRAIN  
HIGHLIGHTS

The world production of coarse grains for 1988/89 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 709 million tons, down 1.6 million or less than 1 percent from last month and down 10 percent from last year. U.S. coarse grain production is estimated at 139 million tons, up 2.3 million from last month, but down 36 percent from last year. Corn output is estimated at 115.6 million tons. Argentina coarse grain is estimated at 14.1 million tons, up 8 percent from last year. East Europe estimate is at 61.9 million tons, down 4 percent from last year.

WORLD OILSEED  
PRODUCTION  
HIGHLIGHTS

The world production of oilseeds for 1988/89 is forecast by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 200.9 million tons, down 3 percent from last year's record output. U.S. production is forecast at 48.7 million tons, down 20 percent from last year. The world soybean production is forecast at 93.7 million tons, 9 percent below last year. U.S. soybean production is estimated at 40.9 million tons, up 2 percent from last month, but down 22 percent from last year.

EC TO INCREASE  
WHEAT EXPORTS

Reports from Brussels indicate that the European Community Commission has raised its 1988/89 export target for wheat and wheat flour to about 17½ million tons, with further increases in the allocation for exports possible as the season progresses. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the EC last year exported 14½ million tons. Recently, the EC reportedly sold large quantities to the USSR, Algeria, Egypt and Poland, all at prices around \$140 per ton.

FRENCH  
CORN

The U.S. could face competition from additional subsidized corn exports from the European Community, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. France expects a record corn crop of 12.7 million tons and could face reduced prospects for exports within the European Community. Italy, traditionally the major market for surplus French corn, is anticipating a large corn crop and reduced imports. France may petition the EC Commission for the additional export restitutions necessary to subsidize the sale of surpluses into third country markets.

U.S. COTTON  
EXPORTS FALL

U.S. monthly cotton exports continued to decline in August, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Exports fell to 265,000 bales, the lowest monthly level since 1985/86. The leading export destinations were South Korea, Japan, the EC, and Taiwan. Total 1988/89 exports are forecast at 5.3 million bales, substantially below the 6.6 million bales exported in 1987/88.

DISEASE-RESISTANT  
CATTLE...AND  
CALVES WITH  
ULCERS

Cattle, like people, inherit from their parents the ability to resist disease. U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers are developing blood tests to identify groups of cattle genes associated with disease resistance that can be used as genetic markers. These gene markers may lead to improved disease resistance in future U.S. cattle breeds. Other new research shows that calves can develop stomach ulcers from licking and s wallowing hair. The massaging action in the last part of the calf's stomach forms the hair into sandpaper-rough balls that can wear through the stomach lining. Studies suggest a lack of copper in diets may be the reason why calves eat hair.



THIS LITTLE  
PIGGY GOES  
TO MARKET  
IF IT HAS AN ID

Beginning on November 14, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is requiring identification on all swine moving in interstate commerce, making it easier to pinpoint the source of diseased hogs or those with harmful drug or chemical residues. The only swine exempt from individual identifications are those raised, marketed and sent to slaughter from a birth to finish operation. These may be identified by lot. The final rule is published in the Oct. 14 Federal Register.

FORAGE  
ASSISTANCE

Livestock producers whose established pastures were damaged by drought or related conditions in 1988, may qualify for a maximum of \$3,500 per person under a cost-sharing program to reseed pastures, according to Sec'y of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng. The program provides for cost-share assistance of up to 50 percent of the cost of reseeding. For details, check with the local offices of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1638...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Throughout the world more and more women are becoming economically responsible for themselves and their families, but often their financial status makes that job very difficult. Brenda Curtis talks with three extension experts about this problem.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1626...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Drought aid for tree farmers; Drought aid for forage producers; A possible seed shortage?; Volunteers help Soil Conservation Service.

CONSUMER TIME #1118...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Water quality update; Drought did a number on lawns; Getting lawns ready for winter; A golf course lawn; Global re-"leaf".

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Thurs, Oct. 27, Oil crops outlook; Fri, Oct. 28, World food needs, World tobacco situation, World cocoa situation; Mon, Oct. 31, Ag. prices; Tues, Nov. 1, Vegetable outlook, Crop/weather update; Thurs, Nov. 3, Livestock and poultry outlook; Mon, Nov. 7, Fruit outlook; Tues, Nov. 8, Crop/weather update. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D

ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 10D

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.

OFFMIKE

**Agri-Business Network...**has brought Lew Middleton (formerly WQHK Fort Wayne, IN) onboard as assistant agri-business director and affiliate relations manager.

**Effects of Drought...**continue to arise. John Wagner, (SD State U.) says beef producers will get less nutritional value from cornstalks in drought areas. Says the usual rate of one cow per acre per month won't work this winter.

**Outlook '89 Conference...**will be held in Washington, D.C. at USDA's Jefferson Auditorium November 29-Dec. 1. Registration packet info at (202) 447-3050.

**Journalists' Conferences...**on food safety and nutrition are scheduled for Washington, D.C. December 1-2 at the National Press Club, and in San Francisco, CA December 8-9 at the Holiday Inn/Financial District. Sponsored by USDA and Food and Drug Administration. Registration fee \$65.

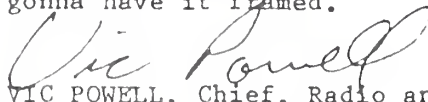
**1989 Yearbook...**will be announced December 1 at the National Press Club.

**Farm Broadcasters Letter**  
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**Agricultural PSA's...**announced a few weeks ago in this column have been requested by several farm directors. Bob Ziegler (WIMA, Lima, OH) was the first. You can get them direct and no cost from Dave White, Soil Conservation Service, at (202) 447-5974.

**History...**10 years ago in this column, Jack Dillard (KWKH Shreveport) writes that the Girl Rodeo Association barrel racing contest has four entries from his area. 20 years ago, Roddy Peeples reports that he has moved from Midland to San Angelo, TX and his network has five stations. Appropriate to mention that... Some problems **never seem to go away**...despite the fact that they are worked. Layne Beaty (USDA Radio & TV Chief, retired) reports that this publication may be getting more treatment from the post office than is needed. Follow this. A recent issue was postmarked twice, September 16 and September 26, but he received it 5 days prior to the 26th. He sent us the newsletter. I'm gonna have it framed.

  
VIC POWELL, Chief, Radio and Television Division